

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A computing apparatus comprising:

an input/output port comprising a buffer memory including a receive buffer for storing input data and a transmit buffer for storing output data;

an application program for writing predetermined data into said transmit buffer memory; and
a switchable connection for transmitting said predetermined data from the transmit buffer
to the receive buffer; and

a BIOS for reading said predetermined data from said receive buffer memory.

2. (Currently amended) The computing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

~~said input/output port further comprising an input terminal for inputting said input data~~
~~and an output terminal for outputting said output data;~~

~~said buffer memory comprising a~~ receive buffer connected to ~~said an~~ input terminal ~~of said~~
input/output port ~~and storing said input data~~ and a said transmit buffer connected to ~~said~~
an output terminal ~~of said input/output port~~ ~~and storing said output data;~~

~~said application program being configured to write said predetermined data into said~~
~~transmit buffer; and~~

~~said BIOS being configured to read said predetermined data from said receive buffer.~~

3. (Original) The computing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein:

said application program being further configured to comprise a graphical user interface allowing
a user to input said predetermined data.

4. (Original) The computing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein:

said input/output port further comprising a switching element connected between said input terminal and said output terminal; and
said application program being configured to control said switching element to control the transfer of said predetermined data from said transmit buffer to said receive buffer.

5. (Original) The computing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein:

said input/output port further comprising a control register, said control register comprising a loopback bit;
said input/output port being configured to open or close said switching element in response to the state of said loopback bit; and
said application program being configured to control the state of said loopback bit.

6. (Original) The computing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein:

said application program being further configured to comprise a graphical user interface allowing a user to input said predetermined data.

7. (Original) A method comprising:

writing predetermined data into a transmit buffer using an application program operating under the control of an operating system of a computing apparatus, wherein said transmit buffer is connected to an output terminal of an input/output port of said computing apparatus; and
reading said predetermined data from a receive buffer using a BIOS of said computing apparatus, wherein said receive buffer is connected to an input terminal of said input/output port and wherein said transmit buffer and said receive buffer are operatively connected to allow the passage of the predetermined data therebetween.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, further comprising:

presenting to a user a graphical user interface;
accepting from said user, via said graphical user interface, said predetermined data.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein the operative connection between said transmit buffer and said receive buffer comprises a switching element.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said switching element comprises a jumper plug selectively placed by a user.
11. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said switching element comprises a switch under the control of said application program.
12. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:
presenting to a user a graphical user interface;
accepting from said user, via said graphical user interface, said predetermined data.